



“My wife and I met our American friends through this program last fall. In the past year we had many memorable moments together, spending Thanksgiving at their parents’ farm, decorating Easter eggs together, cooking American and Chinese food, watching our favorite movies, and playing video games. Most importantly, we shared our opinions and thoughts on life and society. We become good friends in spite of our different culture backgrounds. This friendship is a gift and we will cherish it forever.”

—Chinese International Student

“We can honestly say that we love these friends with all our hearts. We’ve spent hours and hours talking and sharing ideas and feelings. Learning about each other’s culture. Reading the Bible together. Enjoying each other’s food. Not to mention laughing really, really hard!”

—American Host Family

Interested?

To learn more, please contact:

Reaching the world

at your doorstep



**Becoming a Friendship Partner
with an international student**

Imagine

what it would feel like to leave your family, your friends, and everything familiar. To travel around the world to a new country and try to make it feel like home. To struggle to adjust to a new culture with new customs. To try to earn a degree at a university by learning in a language that's not your native tongue.

Over 19,400 international students are now studying in the state of Illinois alone. **Over 70% of them will leave having never entered an American home or visited a place of worship.**

188 countries of the world have students studying in the U.S. Many of these countries restrict or are totally closed to traditional missionaries.



Statistics from *The World at Your Doorstep* by Lawson Lau.

What can I do?

Become a Friendship Partner! The International Friendship Partner Program seeks to:

- Introduce international students to life in the U.S. in a warm, friendly way
- Acquaint families or individuals with other cultures through personal relationships and mutual respect

What are the responsibilities of a Friendship Partner?

- To be in touch with your student a minimum of once a month through a shared activity that's enjoyable to both you and your student.
- Transportation may be required since many students don't own cars.
- Friendship Partners do *not* need to assume responsibility for housing, financial, immigration, academic, employment, health, or serious adjustment problems. The university is well able to meet these needs.
- You don't have to be an expert in foreign affairs or speak a second language. Just express the love of Jesus Christ!



But I wouldn't know how to relate to an international student!

Befriending someone from a different culture might seem daunting, and you might worry about how to relate to someone from a completely different background.



Don't worry! The best thing you can do is to simply invite your new friend into your life. Talk. Ask lots of questions. Laugh. Share meals, both from your culture and theirs. Play games. Celebrate holidays. Visit interesting places. For most students, conversation and exchanging ideas can be more important than a whirlwind of activities. You don't always have to do something special. Your friends may enjoy the chance just to relax and feel at home with you. Sure, you might worry about doing something accidentally insensitive, but when students see how much you care about them, they'll overlook it. Some of the best laughs come from making mistakes together!